

our future. Our constituents deserve no less.

TEXAS TECH PEACE OFFICER
FLOYD EAST, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Officer Floyd East, Jr., of the Texas Tech Police Department recently responded to a routine student welfare check at the dormitory. Callers reported a 19-year-old individual named Hollis Daniels, who was acting erratically and potentially had a weapon.

So Officer East went to Daniel's dorm room, and he discovered drugs and drug paraphernalia. Hollis, the defendant, was arrested and taken to the station for a standard debriefing.

But that is when the intake procedure at the police station went haywire. The defendant was not adequately searched before booking. Suddenly, the dastardly criminal whipped out a gun and fired pointblank into 48-year-old Officer East's head, instantly killing him. This is a photograph of Officer East. Yet another peace officer, another guardian of the thin blue line, murdered for no reason.

The suspect then fled, going on the lam, taking Officer East's body cam with him. The university went on lockdown, anxiously waiting for the killer to be found. Sure enough, thanks to the quick actions of the Texas Tech police force, the outlaw was located on campus and apprehended again.

Officer East was an El Paso, Texas, native. He is survived by his wife, Carmen, and two daughters, Anna and Monica. The funeral was a solemn remembrance wrapped up with the release of over 1,000 black and blue balloons, which flooded the west Texas blue sky, all in Officer East's memory.

Peace officers from all over Texas, and even other States, showed up for the funeral. As the body passed the Army National Guard Armory, officers and military stood at attention and saluted Officer East's body.

Officer Floyd East began his career with the Texas Tech Police Department on December 1, 2014. He started as a security guard at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in El Paso, Texas.

While working as a security guard, he went on to school at El Paso Community College Law Enforcement Academy to obtain his basic peace officer license to be a peace officer in the State of Texas.

Court documents show that the defendant, when he was arrested, concealed a weapon in his pants; and when Officer East's back was turned, the coward drew the weapon and murdered Officer East. The weapon that he had was stolen.

The defendant is charged with capital murder, and a \$5 million bond is set. May Texas justice occur.

Mr. Speaker, our men and women in blue voluntarily do everything they

can to help protect and serve our communities, especially at our colleges and universities. For these remarkable men and women, their safety, like all peace officers, is never guaranteed. While the badge and the uniform represent safety for citizens, for some reason, in our society it becomes a target for other people, like this defendant.

Officer East worked with university students, helping protect young Texans eager to learn on their university campus. He was senselessly killed. There is never an answer for murder, except to hold the person who did the murder accountable.

The defendant's friends quickly jumped to the defendant's defense online, claiming Daniels was not a monster. Mr. Speaker, college students do make mistakes. A mistake is like missing class and sleeping in. Mistakes are not murdering people.

The defendant is totally responsible for his own actions. He can't blame the drugs, he can't blame the fact that he was young, or he can't blame the fact that he was not thinking right.

Mr. Speaker, I was a judge in Texas for 22 years and heard cases like the murder of Officer East. People are responsible for what they do. In our society, we cannot have this feeling that people are not responsible and that something else calls them to do things. People are totally responsible for the choices that they make.

I have heard all of the excuses. I have heard: "Oh, I was too young." "Oh, I was too old." "I was on drugs." "I was affluent." "I wasn't affluent." I have heard all of the excuses.

There is no excuse. People, like this defendant, are responsible for their actions.

Officers like East are a cut above the rest of us, and they protect us from harm's way and they protect us from evildoers. He is of a rare breed, he is the Texas breed of law officers that sacrifice for the rest of us.

Taps have been played for Officer East. He has been laid to rest. We pray for his family, friends, and those officers in west Texas and Texas Tech University.

And that is just the way it is.

CALIFORNIA FIRES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, the worst fire in the history of California has devastated nearly 300,000 acres, destroyed some 7,000 homes, caused billions of dollars in damage, burned to the ground many businesses, and, most sadly, taken the lives of 42 people; and that number may, in fact, rise.

This fire was like no other, propelled by winds that reached speeds of over 70 miles an hour. It moved so fast, burning at times 200 feet per second—that is three football fields every 30 seconds—

that people had little time to escape their burning homes.

People fled with only their night clothes—no time to grab even their medication, important papers, or personal belongings. Thousands of families were displaced and will have to find housing, rebuild their homes and businesses, and rebuild their lives.

Over 100,000 people were evacuated during the late hours of the first night of this monster firestorm. Many of you saw the news coverage play out on your television. The most covered area in the news is an area in Santa Rosa called Coffey Park. This is it. There alone, some 1,300 homes were burned to the ground. This area is on the far western side of the fire-devastated area, a county away from where it started.

The winds were so high that they pushed the blaze across eight lanes of freeway and over two frontage roads to destroy the homes and the lives of these 1,300 families. The winds were so high that cars were not only burned beyond recognition, but they were flipped over. There is a metal garage door that remains stuck about 35 feet off the ground in the remains of a burned-out pine tree.

Leader MCCARTHY was with me in Coffey Park and saw firsthand the devastation. I want to thank the leader for his commitment to work with us to help our communities and the many people so devastated by this unprecedented disaster. I thank also the 11,000 firefighters, the many law enforcement, and National Guard that put their life on the line to stop the raging inferno and protect the lives of the people of my district and the other fire-threatened areas of California. Some of those first responders lost their own homes, but worked 24/7 to help others.

The response was awesome and truly appreciated. Mutual aid came from every county in California, States across our great country, Federal agencies, and from other countries. The actions of civilian heroes and heroines saved an untold number of lives and continue to make life tolerable to those affected by this fire disaster.

The fallout from the disaster will be felt for years, if not decades. You just can't rebuild 7,000 homes and neighborhoods overnight.

The heartbeat of our community—doctors, nurses, workers, teachers, CEOs, and small business owners—were burned out and must start over. My colleagues and I appreciate all of their words of comfort and offers to help. The people hurt by this monster fire will need all of our help. As we move forward, we have to work together to address this devastation that has befallen the people of my district and other parts of northern California.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have spent a lot of time with my friend, Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, over the past week because our districts neighbor each other. While the worst of this

fire was in Congressman THOMPSON's district, portions of that terrible Santa Rosa fire spilled over to affect my constituents, and I had a separate fire in Mendocino County, the Redwood Complex, that itself would have ranked among the top 20 wildfires in California history. The fact that all of these fires happened together is truly an unprecedented and a dreadful crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. THOMPSON. He has been everywhere in the region. I thank our local government partners, and I thank our colleagues, Minority Leader PELOSI, and Majority Leader MCCARTHY. The support has been bipartisan and it has been nationwide. FEMA has been on the ground along with first responders doing heroic work to get the recovery and the rebuilding process started. We are grateful for all of that, but we are only at the beginning.

If you want to see your government doing good work, go to the local assistance center in Santa Rosa or in Ukiah and watch how the wraparound services are there. Every need that these fire victims, these devastated families, can imagine is there to be met. But we are at the beginning, and we are going to need that support over a long-sustained period.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for standing with us at this early stage of dealing with this crisis. We are going to need them over the long haul. We will be talking more about this going forward.

TAX REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, everyone remembers the excitement of receiving that first paycheck and the feeling of accomplishment that hard work brings. We also remember just as vividly the disappointment we experienced when we saw just how much of our hard-earned money went to taxes.

It is a rite of passage that we have grown used to, but that doesn't mean it is right. Americans deserve to take home more of their pay.

That is exactly why we need tax reform, tax cuts, and tax simplification, and why I am working with President Donald Trump to make our tax system work for West Virginia's families.

Our tax framework would cut taxes for West Virginia's middle class families, double the standard deduction for individuals and couples, and create jobs by making small businesses and American companies more competitive.

West Virginia's families work hard and have been squeezed by our State's economic downturn. Under our tax framework and with the support of President Trump, help is on the way.

We will also make it easier and simpler for Americans—West Virginians—to file their taxes. Most families will

be able to file their taxes just on a postcard, saving them both time and money.

Our plan for tax reform, our plan for tax cuts, our plan for tax simplification will help us build a better America, a better West Virginia, one where families have more opportunities, more jobs, and more money in their pockets.

□ 1030

NATURAL DISASTERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues Congressman THOMPSON and Congressman HUFFMAN in paying tribute to the first responders who responded to the fires in northern California and, indeed, in southern California as well.

The spirit of our community is so magnificent seeing people come together to help each other. I salute our colleague MIKE THOMPSON, who so much of his district was like an inferno, but much of his district is still thriving and one group helping another, and Mr. HUFFMAN there, side by side with him, the whole time.

This is very tragic. The loss of life is heartbreaking, the loss of livelihood is devastating, and the loss of homes, of course, takes a while to replace.

We have seen other natural disasters in the rest of the country, in Harvey and Irma and Maria and Nate, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Texas, and Louisiana. So many of the people of our country devastated in a short period of time.

So, in times of natural disaster, it is very important for the Federal Government to honor its social compact with the American people and to be there for them. I look forward to working in a bipartisan way for us to have the resources for FEMA to do its job and for the SBA to do its job to help businesses and homeowners recover their losses. And, again, pray; our hearts and prayers are with the families of those who lost their loved ones, their livelihoods, and some who are still in need of recovery.

REPUBLICANS' DEVASTATING TAX CUT PLAN

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the devastating tax cut plan that the Republicans are putting forth. If you are in the middle class, you will most likely be having your taxes increased. If you have a family member on Medicare or Medicaid, you will be, most likely, devastated by the impact of this.

This is a bill that the Republicans are putting forth that will add trillions of dollars to the national debt while they sing the praises of fiscal responsibility. The fiscal hawks have become an endangered species. No longer are they there to say: We are not going to borrow from our future in order to give tax cuts to the wealthiest people in our country.

Indeed, 80 percent of the Trump-GOP tax framework, the framework net tax cuts go to the top 1 percent of Americans. The top 1 percent of Americans get 80 percent of the Trump-GOP framework net tax cuts.

As they increase the deficit, anyone who might be haunted by the thought that, well, we better cut someplace, where do you think they are going to go? They will devastate Medicare. They will devastate Medicaid.

What does that mean in the lives of the American people? It means that middle class families in our country will be subsidizing tax cuts for the wealthiest families and wealthiest corporations in our country. This is completely wrong.

It will also have a devastating impact on our budget priorities. In our budget priorities, our budget should be a statement of our national values. What is important to us as a country should reflect what is in the budget: investments in education so that children and families can reach their aspirations, so that communities can reach their economic success, so that America continues to be number one globally, competitively, and so that we, again, have the resources to invest in science and technology and our national security to keep America number one.

Infrastructure, so talked about, infrastructure—build, build, build:

Build across America roads, bridges, broadband. Build water systems and the rest, all of the needs that we have.

Build the human infrastructure of America by investing in education and healthcare and the rest.

Build our democracy by making sure that our democratic process has the resources necessary to be conducted in a way where every person's vote is counted as cast.

So all of this is connected to governance, and all of this is harmed by the assault on our budget that this tax proposal will present.

Middle class taxes will increase. Middle-income families will pay more. Tens of millions of middle class families will pay higher taxes.

One of the ways they will be because of the great idea the Republicans have to stop the deduction for State and local taxes. This is a big hit on middle class families in our country.

It steals trillions of dollars, borrows from the future and from our children's future to give tax cuts to the wealthiest. Eighty percent of the GOP tax cuts go to the wealthiest 1 percent at the expense of our children and working families and our country's future.

It would devastate Medicare and Medicaid. After adding trillions to the deficit, the GOP will use the deficits to justify destroying Medicare and Medicaid. And they are on it. They are already, in the bill, saying that they are going to means test Medicare. It is in keeping with their theory that Medicare should wither on the vine.

Democrats are for A Better Deal, for real bipartisan tax reform. Any business will tell you that what they want